

# **Complete This Survey and Have a Chance to Win a Walmart Gift Certificate**

## **VIRGINIA LEGAL AID SOCIETY 2012 LEGAL NEEDS SURVEY: Form A**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Virginia Legal Aid Society (VLAS) provides legal help to low-income persons and families in Central, Southside, and Western Tidewater Virginia for no fee. Its mission is to resolve serious legal problems, promote economic and family stability, reduce poverty through effective legal assistance, and champion equal justice. VLAS uses legal skills to solve problems in health care, public benefits, housing, family relations, wills and powers of attorney, consumer purchases and borrowing, education, and employment.

We need to know about the kinds of problems you have and about what you do to solve them. We hope that you can take a few minutes to answer some questions for us. Your answers will be kept confidential.

**To give our thanks for your completed survey, we would like to put your name in a drawing for one of the following prizes. After you have finished, just fill out the information on the last page of the form so we can contact you.**

**Prizes:           \$25 gift certificate for Walmart (ten will be given; drawing held April 2)**

### **BEGINNING**

We would like to ask you about problems that may have affected you or someone else in your household. If you answer **No** to the first question in any section, you can skip to the next section.

#### **Section A. HOUSING**

1. In the past year, did you live in a place that you were renting from someone else?  
**Circle Yes or No (If No, go to Section B)**
2. If yes, please circle any of the following that applies to you or anyone in your household in the last twelve months:
  1. Eviction
  2. Unsafe or unhealthy conditions in the unit
  3. Major problem with a landlord or public housing authority
  4. Problems getting or keeping utilities like water, electricity or gas
  5. Discrimination because of race, sex, disability, source of income, having children, or any other reason in connection with your housing
  6. Another problem (describe) \_\_\_\_\_
3. If you circled any of the above, which problem bothered you the most?  
(Circle one: 1 2 3 4 5 6 )
4. What, if anything, did you do about the problem that bothered you the most? (Circle one)
  1. Acted on my own
  2. Got help from a lawyer in private practice
  3. Got help from a legal aid lawyer or a paralegal

4. Got help from someone else
5. Did nothing

5. How satisfied were you with the results? (Circle one)

1. I was very satisfied with the results.
2. I was only somewhat satisfied
3. I was not satisfied because the person helping me did not follow through.
4. I was not satisfied because I did not have the money I needed to solve things.
5. I was not satisfied for other reasons. (Please explain) \_\_\_\_\_

6. If you answered "did nothing", why did you make that decision? (Circle one of the following)

1. I did nothing because I could not afford a lawyer.
2. I did nothing because I did not know about legal aid.
3. I did nothing because I did not want to use legal aid.
4. I did nothing because it was the easiest thing to do.
5. I did nothing for other reasons (please explain) \_\_\_\_\_

## Section B. GOVERNMENT SERVICES

7. During the past year, did you or anyone else in your household have a neighborhood problem with local government services? See the examples in the next question. **Yes or No? (Circle one) If No, go to section C.**

8. If yes, please circle any of the following that applies to you or someone in your household in the last 12 months:

We had a problem or needed help with:

1. garbage not being collected,
2. abandoned lots or buildings not being cleaned up,
3. dangerous holes in streets or sidewalks,
4. lack of city water, or
5. lack of city sewer
6. another problem (describe) \_\_\_\_\_

9. If you circled any of the above, which problem bothered you the most?  
(Circle one: 1 2 3 4 5 6 )

10. What, if anything, did you do about the problem that bothered you the most? (Circle one)

1. Acted on my own
2. Got help from a lawyer in private practice
3. Got help from a legal aid lawyer or a paralegal
4. Got help from someone else
5. Did nothing

11. How satisfied were you with the results? (Circle one)

1. I was very satisfied with the results.
2. I was only somewhat satisfied
3. I was not satisfied because the person helping me did not follow through.
4. I was not satisfied because I did not have the money I needed to solve things.
5. I was not satisfied for other reasons. (please explain) \_\_\_\_\_

12. If you answered "did nothing", why did you make that decision? (Circle one)

1. I did nothing because I could not afford a lawyer.
2. I did nothing because I did not know about legal aid.
3. I did nothing because I did not want to use legal aid.
4. I did nothing because it was the easiest thing to do.
5. I did nothing for other reasons (please explain) \_\_\_\_\_

### Section C. FAMILY

13. In the past year, did you or someone in your household have problems from a family matter such as the break-up of a marriage or live-in relationship? **Yes or No? (Circle one) If No, go to Section D.**

14. If yes, please circle any of the following that applies to you or anyone in your household in the last twelve months:

We had a problem or needed help with:

1. divorce
2. child custody
3. child support
4. spousal support
5. another problem (please describe) \_\_\_\_\_

15. If you circled any of the above, which problem bothered you the most?

(Circle one: 1 2 3 4 5 )

16. What, if anything, did you do about the problem that bothered you the most? (Circle one)

1. Acted on my own
2. Got help from a lawyer in private practice
3. Got help from a legal aid lawyer or a paralegal
4. Got help from someone else
5. Did nothing

17. How satisfied were you with the results? (Circle one)

1. I was very satisfied with the results.
2. I was only somewhat satisfied
3. I was not satisfied because the person helping me did not follow through.
4. I was not satisfied because I did not have the money I needed to solve things.
5. I was not satisfied for other reasons. (please explain) \_\_\_\_\_

18. If you answered "did nothing", why did you make that decision? (Circle one)

1. I did nothing because I could not afford a lawyer.
2. I did nothing because I did not know about legal aid.
3. I did nothing because I did not want to use legal aid.
4. I did nothing because it was the easiest thing to do.
5. I did nothing for other reasons (please explain) \_\_\_\_\_

## Section D. EDUCATION

19. In the past year, did you or someone in your household have problems in getting services from a public school or being able to attend a public school? **Yes or No? (Circle one) If No, go to Section E.**

20. If yes, please circle any of the following that applies to you or anyone in your household in the last twelve months:

We had a problem or needed help with:

1. School suspension
2. School expulsion
3. Special education
4. School discipline
5. School costs
6. Bullying
7. Another problem (describe) \_\_\_\_\_

21. If you circled any of the above, which problem bothered you the most?  
(Circle one: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 )

22. What, if anything, did you do about the problem that bothered you the most? (Circle one)

1. Acted on my own
2. Got help from a lawyer in private practice
3. Got help from a legal aid lawyer or a paralegal
4. Got help from someone else
5. Did nothing

23. How satisfied were you with the results? (Circle one)

1. I was very satisfied with the results.
2. I was only somewhat satisfied
3. I was not satisfied because the person helping me did not follow through.
4. I was not satisfied because I did not have the money I needed to solve things.
5. I was not satisfied for other reasons. (please explain) \_\_\_\_\_

## Section E. ABUSE

24. In the past year, did you or someone in your household have problems in being physically abused, or in being taken advantage of money-wise? **Yes or No? (Circle one) If No, go to Section F**

25. If yes, please circle the age of the person:

1. 17 or younger
2. 18-59
3. 60 or older

26. Please circle any of the following that applies to you or anyone in your household in the last twelve months that had this problem:

We had a problem or needed help with:

1. Physical abuse
2. Emotional abuse
3. Financial abuse
4. Something different; please describe: \_\_\_\_\_

27. If you circled any of the above, which problem bothered you the most?

(Circle one: 1 2 3 4 )

28. What, if anything, did you do about the problem that bothered you the most? (Circle one)

1. Acted on my own
2. Got help from a lawyer in private practice
3. Got help from a legal aid lawyer or a paralegal
4. Got help from someone else
5. Did nothing

29. How satisfied were you with the results? (Circle one)

1. I was very satisfied with the results.
2. I was only somewhat satisfied
3. I was not satisfied because the person helping me did not follow through.
4. I was not satisfied because I did not have the money I needed to solve things.
5. I was not satisfied for other reasons. (please explain) \_\_\_\_\_

**Section F. GUARDIANSHIPS, WILLS, POWERS OF ATTORNEY:**

30. In the past year, did you or someone in your household have problems with a guardianship, will, power of attorney, medical power of attorney, or living will? **Yes or No? (Circle one) If No, go to Section G.**

31. If yes, please circle the age of the person:

1. 17 or younger
2. 18-59
3. 60 or older

32. Please circle any of the following that applies to you or anyone in your household in the last twelve months that had this problem:

We had a problem or needed help with:

1. Guardianship
2. Will
3. Power of attorney
4. Medical power of attorney
5. Living will
6. Another problem (describe) \_\_\_\_\_

33. If you circled any of the above, which problem bothered you the most?  
(Circle one: 1 2 3 4 5 6 )

34. What, if anything, did you do about the problem that bothered you the most? (Circle one)

1. Acted on my own
2. Got help from a lawyer in private practice
3. Got help from a legal aid lawyer or a paralegal
4. Got help from someone else
5. Did nothing

35. How satisfied were you with the results? (Circle one)

1. I was very satisfied with the results.
2. I was only somewhat satisfied

3. I was not satisfied because the person helping me did not follow through.
  4. I was not satisfied because I did not have the money I needed to solve things.
  5. I was not satisfied for other reasons. (please explain) \_\_\_\_\_
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## Section G. EMPLOYMENT

36. In the past year, did you or someone in your household have problems with employment?

**Yes or No? (Circle one) If No, go to Section H.**

37. If yes, please circle any of the following that applies to you or anyone in your household in the last twelve months that had this problem:

We had a problem or needed help with:

1. Being denied a job, raise or promotion due to discrimination
2. No accommodation for a disability
3. Not being paid the correct amount
4. Sexual harassment
5. Unsafe working conditions
6. Retaliation for following the law or company policies
7. Another problem (describe) \_\_\_\_\_

38. If you circled any of the above, which problem bothered you the most?

(Circle one: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 )

39. What, if anything, did you do about the problem that bothered you the most? (Circle one)

1. Acted on my own
2. Got help from a lawyer in private practice
3. Got help from a legal aid lawyer or a paralegal
4. Got help from someone else
5. Did nothing

40. How satisfied were you with the results? (Circle one)

1. I was very satisfied with the results.
  2. I was only somewhat satisfied
  3. I was not satisfied because the person helping me did not follow through.
  4. I was not satisfied because I did not have the money I needed to solve things.
  5. I was not satisfied for other reasons. (please explain) \_\_\_\_\_
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## Section H. BENEFITS

41. In the past year, did you or someone in your household have problems with public benefits like welfare, TANF, Food Stamps, SNAP, disability income, Medicaid/Medicare/FAMIS, unemployment compensation, workers compensation, or other benefit program? **Yes or No? (If yes, circle the program involved; if No, go to Section I.)**

42. If yes, please circle any of the following that applies to you or anyone in your household in the last twelve months:

We had a problem or needed help with:

1. Being discouraged from applying
2. Having a benefit denied or cut unfairly
3. Being expected to meet unfair requirements to get the benefit
4. Being told you have to pay back money you had already received

5. Not being given information about how the process works or how to appeal a decision
6. Being told you have to be found disabled by Social Security before you can apply for Medicaid
7. Another problem (describe) \_\_\_\_\_

43. If you circled any of the above, which problem bothered you the most?  
(Circle one: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 )

44. What, if anything, did you do about the problem that bothered you the most? (Circle one)

1. Acted on my own
2. Got help from a lawyer in private practice
3. Got help from a legal aid lawyer or a paralegal
4. Got help from someone else
5. Did nothing

45. How satisfied were you with the results? (Circle one)

1. I was very satisfied with the results.
2. I was only somewhat satisfied
3. I was not satisfied because the person helping me did not follow through.
4. I was not satisfied because I did not have the money I needed to solve things.
5. I was not satisfied for other reasons. (please explain) \_\_\_\_\_

## Section I. ABOUT YOU:

Just a few more questions about your background.

46. How old were you on your last birthday?

1. Under 18
2. 18-29
3. 30-39
4. 40-49
5. 50-59
6. 60-65
7. 66 or older

47. Gender: Male Female (Circle one)

48. How many adults and children currently live in your household including yourself?

Number of residents \_\_\_\_\_

49. How many of your household members are:

1. Under 18? \_\_\_\_\_
2. 18 to 64? \_\_\_\_\_
3. 65 and older? \_\_\_\_\_

50. Is this a single parent household? Circle **Yes** or **No**

51. If yes, what is the gender of the single parent? (Circle one) 1. **Male** 2. **Female**

52. Which of the following best describes most of your household members:

1. White
2. Black or African-American
3. Hispanic or Latino

4. Native American or Alaskan Native
5. Asian or Pacific Islander
6. Something else: (describe) \_\_\_\_\_

53. Please circle the income category that most closely describes your **household** income in the 2011:

1. \$0-\$10,000
2. \$10,001-\$20,000
3. \$20,001-\$30,000
4. \$30,001-\$40,000
5. \$40,001-\$50,000
6. More than \$50,000

54. During the past 12 months, has your household been without telephone service for 1 month or more?  
(Circle one) **Yes** or **No**

55. Which type of phone service do you use most often? (Circle one)

1. Our own cell phone (not a smartphone)
2. Our own smartphone
3. Our own land line
4. Phone of a relative or friend

56. If a cell phone or smartphone, are your phone minutes in your contract: ..... (Circle one:)

1. limited
2. unlimited

57. How often do you use the Internet for information? (Circle one)

1. Often
2. Not often
3. Seldom or never

58. How often do you use email? (Circle one)

1. Often
2. Not often
3. Seldom or never

59. When you do use the Internet or check email, how are you most likely to get access? (Circle one)

1. Through a computer in my home
2. Through a computer in someone else's home or a workplace
3. Through a computer in a library
4. Through a smartphone
5. Other (describe) \_\_\_\_\_

60. Finally, please identify the county, city, or town where you live. \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you very much for your help. We value the time you took to answer these questions.

If you would like other information about legal aid, please call 1-866-534-5243 (866-LEGL-AID), or visit our website, [www.vlas.org](http://www.vlas.org)



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WOULD YOU LIKE TO TAKE PART IN OUR DRAWING FOR WALMART GIFT CARDS?

IF SO, PLEASE FILL IN YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION BELOW, AND TURN IN THIS SHEET WITH YOUR SURVEY

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for your time!